

United States Senate

December 6, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Mr. James M. Peck
President & Chief Executive Officer
TransUnion
555 W. Adams Street
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Dear Mr. Peck:

I am writing on behalf of Post-9/11 Veterans whose credit report histories and scores have been harmed as a result of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) failure to effectively implement the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, known as the "Forever G.I. Bill." As you should be aware, the VA Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) failed to provide legally-required monthly housing allowance (MHA) payments as a result of mismanagement related to staffing and information technology (IT) upgrades.

VA has pledged to "make whole" all Veterans who were underpaid or not paid at all. However, as you are aware, those Veterans who fell behind on their housing payments or were evicted will receive adverse marks on credit reports that may result in a lifetime of hardship. Banking fees, interest on loans or credit cards and financial charges for unpaid bills may lower credit scores. After the storm has passed, Veterans may continue to struggle to open future bank accounts, start businesses and secure loans.

It is outrageous that a single Veteran would experience financial hardship as a result of VA's failures to provide accurate MHA payments or any payment at all. Fortunately, I am confident that we are in agreement that our Nation should be doing everything we can to help servicemembers successfully transition into civilian life.

It is my expectation that your company, along with every credit bureau, is already working with industry, VA and financial regulators to guarantee that no Veteran is prevented from purchasing a home and vehicle as a result of derogatory marks stemming from VA's errors. If accurate, I am requesting a detailed status update on these public-private initiatives to protect the financial health of our Veterans.

Alternately, if your firm has not yet engaged with VA and financial regulators, I am strongly urging you to act swiftly to contact VA to begin identifying individuals who may have

experienced unfair credit downgrades and start working with your customers, private companies and VA to make sure that their credit reports and scores are permanently fixed moving forward.

As the leader of a major credit reporting bureau, you possess the power and resources to make sure our Veterans' financial futures are not harmed. While it is too late to prevent certain Veterans from experiencing eviction or dipping into savings as a result of VBA payment errors, you can still prevent lasting damage by working with VA and other relevant entities.

In addition, while I am not aware of any legal impediments that prevent your company from working with counterparts in the private and public sectors to fix Veterans' credit reports and scores, I am confident that, if necessary, Congress would support advancing legislation to authorize this effort.

Finally, beyond working to fix credit reports and preventing permanent damage to the credit-worthiness of Veterans who failed to receive adequate or any MHA payments, I would urge your company and the two other credit reporting bureaus to help Veterans with obtaining free credit monitoring services and valid debt relief assistance.

My office stands ready to work with you in supporting your efforts to protect the financial futures of Post-9/11 Veterans. Thank you for your consideration of my request and I look forward to working with you on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" and last name "Duckworth" clearly legible.

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator